

Lucian Freud: Networks, Contexts, Responses (Dublin, 7 Sep 19)

Trinity Long Room Hub, Trinity College Dublin, Sep 07, 2019

Deadline: Mar 31, 2019

Nathan O'Donnell

A one-day symposium on the work of Lucian Freud will take place in the Trinity Long Room Hub in Trinity College Dublin, 7 September 2019. This symposium is part of an ongoing research partnership between the Department of the History of Art and Architecture in Trinity College Dublin and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, in connection with the five-year IMMA Collection: Freud Project (2016-21).

Papers are sought which will contribute to the mapping out of new theoretical and historical approaches to Freud's work. The aim of the symposium is to explore and test out new ways to consider, and critique, Freud's work, examining it in terms of adjacent cultural categories, conceived within a number of frameworks: period, subject, approach, or medium.

For a variety of reasons, Freud's work has not yet been subject to the kinds of theoretical scrutiny afforded many other artist contemporaries working in conceptual and other traditions. This symposium invites speculation as to why this might be the case, while also aiming to engage researchers interested in applying new analytical methods to Freud's practice, with its intense focus on the body, its durational quality, and its curious, usually implicit, relationship to certain strands of continental philosophy, particularly existentialism and phenomenology.

Theoretical approaches to Freud's work might include (but are not limited to): feminist and queer-feminist considerations of Freud's painted bodies; analyses of the body in terms of post-humanism/trans-humanism; phenomenological or psychoanalytical approaches; the philosophy of portraiture; Freud and the domestic; Freud and the Jewish diaspora; or considerations of Freud through the lens of celebrity studies.

The symposium organisers hope to strike a balance between theoretical and historical approaches. As such, papers are also sought on the contexts and connections through which Freud worked, his networks and the galleries, publications and patrons through which his work was supported and disseminated.

Given the context of this conference, one area of focus will be Freud's time spent in Ireland in the late 1940s and 50s; but Dublin is only one of several coordinates through which Freud's work developed. In London he was part of the circle of artists and writers who fraternised in Soho, around the Colony Club. He also made several visits to Paris, Madrid, New York. And, though he was at pains to disavow it, his familial connections to Berlin and Vienna can occasionally be seen

to surface in his work. There will be particular interest in research that focuses upon the world of periodical publishing and the gallery systems that underpinned such relationships and practices.

Possible themes/approaches:

- The spread of existentialism in Europe
- Ideas of Bohemia in post-war Europe
- Marginal and late modernisms in art and literature
- Exhibition and gallery histories
- Illustration and the publishing world, wartime and postwar contexts
- Literary and visual art cross-pollinations
- The decline of figurative painting after the mid-1950s
- Peripherality and 'national' art-historical narratives
- 'Schools' of painting in London and Paris
- 'Returns' to painting and figuration in the 1980s
- The contemporary dealer/auction system and the status of painting
- The politics of portraiture
- Representing/'figuring' the body
- Feminist interrogations of the art world and gallery system
- Ideas of 'risk', masculinity and the 'heroic' male artist
- Feminist and post-colonial reassessments of obscured, under-acknowledged, or 'failed' artists and writers
- Queer or queer-feminist counter-narratives

Abstracts of no more than 250 words are invited by 31 March 2019. The schedule will be based upon panels of 20-minute papers, but proposals for alternative/collaborative forms of presentation are also welcome.

Please address submissions and/or queries to Dr Nathan O'Donnell, Irish Research Council Enterprise Postdoctoral Fellow, Trinity College Dublin/Irish Museum of Modern Art, in connection with the IMMA Collection: Freud Project. Email: nathan.odonnell@imma.ie

Reference:

CFP: Lucian Freud: Networks, Contexts, Responses (Dublin, 7 Sep 19). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 8, 2018 (accessed Jul 9, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/19475>>.